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02/15/2012 Minutes

Minutes for the ABAC meeting of February 15, 2012
 (Approved March 21, 2012)

Board members present were Christopher Tonkin, Jack Johnson, Stephan Miller, Scott Smith, Doug Greenfield and Ron Sender. Joey Glushko, Carl Wagner and Todd Spivak were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

*The January minutes were accepted after minor corrections.

Report on the most recent TAC meeting. Scott told us that the town is waiting for the 75% design plan for the Mass. Ave. Redevelopment Project. He added that some citizens may be proposing a referendum on the Mass. Ave. plan. Ron and Stephan gave a summary of the last CLAMP meeting where the committee decided which of the alternative designs for the Mass. Ave./Rt.60 intersection to recommend. The favored design can be summarized as bike lanes on both sides of Mass. Ave. but no eastward diagonal crossing lane through the intersection. This version also includes the bicycle track through the Uncle Sam Park, and a traffic signal at the westward crossing point at Swan Place, although funds may not be available to install the traffic signal at the outset.

Carl gave us his take on what the design should include. He is strongly in favor of connecting the ends of the path in Arlington Center with a dedicated cycle track. He feels that the inexperienced cyclists that make up a moderate percentage of the riders on the path will not be comfortable with bike lanes and unmarked crossings. We discussed the merits of these two alternative proposals. Carl also encouraged us to contact the Uncle Sam committee and discuss the possibility of running the cycle track through the park rather than along the edge.

Recreational Trails Grant Program. Joey needs short 10-15 word descriptions of eleven sites of interest around town such as Spy Pond, Menotomy Rocks Park and the Arlington Reservoir. We responded by volunteering to write the descriptions.

Joey told us that, unfortunately, there were no responses to the RFP for the Trail Improvements Project. She said that the RFP will be changed to make it more attractive and then reissued. Joey also noticed, at a meeting in Bedford, that there are many new attractions in Depot Park at that end of the Minuteman Bikeway.

Planning for the Winter Social, March 8, 2012. Joey will check the auditorium at the Arlington Center For The Arts, our new venue for this year. Jack asked what entrance we should use for the Social. Any entrance can be used. Scott suggested including a map with the promotional material. Joey and Jack will work on publicity—Jack will draft the announcement and Joey will distribute it. Scott suggested we put up a sign at the Whittemore-Robbins House the evening of the event just in case someone goes there by mistake. We briefly discussed how to get the word out about the Social.

LAB-Bicycle Friendly Community application. The application has been submitted! Joey told us that we may hear from the LAB by the end of March. Jack added that the official announcement is usually in May but applicants may be notified earlier.

Bike-Arlington Tour, May 20. We discussed the dangers of cycling down Robin Hood road. Christopher told us that he has not yet gotten permission to visit the dam between the Mystic Lakes which is to be part of this year's ride. Carl reported that the Alewife path is nearly finished and we should route the bike tour along that path. Carl also said he would like to see a bigger web presence for biking interests in Arlington including announcements of the Bike Tour and the opening of the new Alewife Trail.

ABAC Web site. We discussed the slow genesis of the ABAC web site. Carl would like to see a more active and exciting site. He thinks that there is enough interest for a vigorous discussion page about cycling in Arlington. We discussed the Google bike layer in Google Maps and how we could use this resource. Scott suggested a live crowd-sourced map of Arlington where pedestrians and bicyclists could recommend safe routes and areas to avoid. Jack suggested that we link the old ABAC site to the new site to reduce the need to remember the long Google URL.

Carl told us that he would like to see a Friends of Bicycling committee in Arlington. Ron responded by outlining for Carl the history of our thoughts on such a group.

Executive Board Recruiting. Ron was reappointed to the Board by the Selectmen last month. Christopher will put a recruiting notice and an invitation to the Winter Social on the MassBike list.

Safety sign board in late April. The Police have agreed to let us use their electronic sign board to flash messages to passing motorists and cyclists. We are looking for safety-related phrases that can be flashed on the sign board, which will be located in front of Town Hall and possibly in other high-traffic locations. We spent some time thinking up phrases that would be appropriate and non-inflammatory. Joey would like to see us finalizing these phrases in March. Joey also suggested public service announcements about bicycles on Arlington's public access cable station's splash screens.

Legal Handbook—Requirements and Responsibilities. Joey showed us the Town of Arlington Legal Handbook. There is a 25-question test on ethics that every Town committee member must take every even-numbered year. She gave us the URL and asked us to read the information, complete the test and hand in the signed certificate of completion.

*The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm.

*Notes that a vote of the board was taken.

Minutes submitted by Stephan Miller